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Acting Commissioner



State of Connecticut
Department of Economic and
Community Development

***TESTIMONY PRESENTED TO THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT
COMMITTEE
March 2, 2011***

*Ronald Angelo, Acting Commissioner
Department of Economic and Community Development*

SB 1047 AN ACT CONCERNING CHANGES TO CERTAIN HOUSING STATUTES

Good afternoon Senator Cassano, Representative Gentile, Senator Fasano, Representative Aman and members of the Planning and Development Committee. My name is Ron Angelo and I am the Acting Commissioner of the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD). I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you to today to discuss the department's support for *SB 1047, An Act Concerning Changes to Certain Housing Statutes*.

This is an agency resubmission of technical changes from the 2010 legislative session which successfully passed the Senate, but was not acted upon in the House due to timing constraints. As the title implies, this bill is meant to address several technical issues in several different housing development statutes. These proposed changes will increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the impacted programs. Below is a brief summary of the changes and why they are needed.

Sections 1 and 2 amend the State-Assisted Housing Sustainability Fund to make the regulations permissive and to move authority from the Advisory Committee to the Housing Committee. The Sustainability Fund, which had been funded through surplus funds in the past, currently has no balance. Therefore regulations are not necessary at this time. Preparing them would be time consuming and financially burdensome to the department.

Sections 3, 4 and 5 pertain to Housing Partnerships. We are requesting that Housing Partnerships be eligible applicants for our Resident Service Coordinator and our Congregate Housing programs. We are also requesting that Housing Partnerships be codified into the statutes as an eligible recipient for operating subsidies under the Congregate Housing Program similar to the provisions of the Elderly Housing programs. This will significantly reduce the administrative burden on both DECD and Partnerships since presently we must pass these funds through a third party such as a Housing Authority.

Section 6 deals with our database of available units suitable for persons with disabilities. Due to time constraints and DECD's inability to enforce these requirements onto private landlords,

some of the required information cannot be practically maintained. This amendment will allow DECD to collect data “to the extent practicable.”

Sections 7, 8 and 9 all pertain to the Housing Trust Fund Program. Proposed changes include allowing 3rd party contract administrators to receive funding and also allowing for the receipt of funding from other sources. Our primary objective behind this change is to be prepared in case we receive federal Housing Trust Fund monies.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.